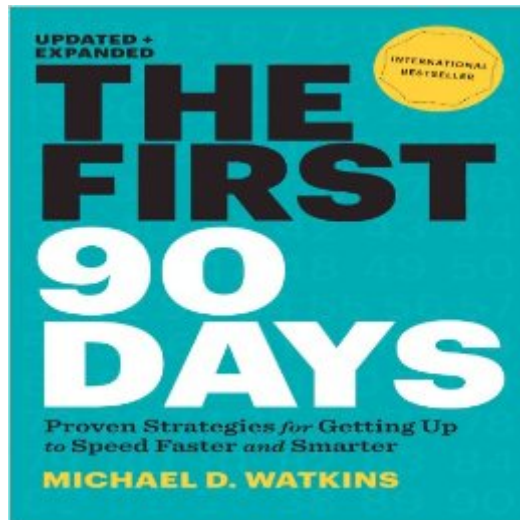


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# The First 90 Days: Critical Success Strategies For New Leaders At All Levels (Your Coach In A Box)



## Synopsis

The window of opportunity in a new position is a short one; according to career transition expert Michael Watkins, a new leader has 90 days to determine his success or failure on the job. In *THE FIRST 90 DAYS*, Watkins offers a practical, proven-effective guide for anyone moving into a new professional role. Whatever the stage of the listener's career, whether starting a new position or just adding additional responsibilities, these techniques can insure that this critical transition period proceeds quickly, smoothly and effectively. Drawing on both real-world examples and his groundbreaking research on leadership, Watkins provides a framework for success in all stages of the process, including: Diagnosing the new situation Crafting winning transition strategies Taking charge quickly and authoritatively Building teams and coalitions Securing early wins Avoiding the most common pitfalls Laying the groundwork for long-term success A breakthrough personal and professional survival guide, *THE FIRST 90 DAYS* will speak to self-help listeners across the career spectrum.

## Book Information

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## Customer Reviews

This book is not just for managers at the executive level. It's also for you and me. It's for functional managers, project managers, and supervisors. The book targets new leaders at all levels that are making the transition from one rung of the ladder to the next. If you have just been promoted to a new leadership position (or expect to be soon), then this book is for you. The book outlines ten strategies that will shorten the time it takes you to reach what Watkins calls the breakeven point: the

point at which your organization needs you as much as you need the job. Here they are ... the ten strategies:

1. **PROMOTE YOURSELF.** Make a mental break from your old job. Prepare to take charge in the new one. Don't assume that what has made you successful so far will continue to do so. The dangers of sticking with what you know, working hard at doing it, and failing miserably are very real.
2. **ACCELERATE YOUR LEARNING.** Climb the learning curve as fast as you can in your new organization. Understand markets, products, technologies, systems, and structures, as well as its culture and politics. It feels like drinking from a fire hose. So you have to be systematic and focused about deciding what you need to learn.
3. **MATCH STRATEGY TO SITUATION.** There are no universal rules for success in transitions. You need to diagnose the business situation accurately and clarify its challenges and opportunities. The author identifies four very different situations: launching a start-up, leading a turnaround, devising a realignment, and sustaining a high-performing unit. You need to know what your unique situation looks like before you develop your action plan.
4. **SECURE EARLY WINS.** Early victories build your credibility and create momentum.

This is a really useful book filled with sage advice for anyone assuming a leadership position, particularly as a former outsider to the organization. It's filled with reminders that you don't walk in with "the answer," that instead winning the trust and respect of your cohorts is a learning process that you should begin with great intensity. The first half of the book relates directly to someone who is assuming a management role, the next quarter of the book is about what to do as a new employee serving under a boss or bosses (perhaps as a mid-level manager). The last bit of the book gives a brief introduction to strategic thinking and the book concludes with questions to ask yourself (and your family) in evaluating your transition. It is applicable to any firm, church, non-profit, and even (mostly) the government. Here's a summary of the points I gleaned:

- Establish your integrity in first 30 days.
- Learn all you can about the organization, put on your "historian" hat.
- Don't suggest changes without examining what has been done previously.
- Silence is not accession.
- Meet with everyone in the organization to evaluate their expectations. Ask them what they think you should focus on.
- Ask same questions of all so no one treated different and you have a cross-section.
- Look for "early wins," low-hanging fruit of improvements you can make or other things to boost morale.

Dealing with your boss in the first 30 days:

- Be proactive, assume it's on your shoulders to build the relationship and get the support you need.
- Schedule meetings to discuss expectations, evaluations, and personal development.
- Figure out what would give your boss "early wins."

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